

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2571

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY GABERONE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MZ

SUBJECT: NEW MOZAMBICAN GOVERNOR GENERAL

1. SO FAR AS WE CAN TELL FROM LOCAL SOURCES, IT NOW SEEMS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT MOZAMBICAN-BORN LAWYER, DR. HENRIQUE VASCO SOARES DE MELO WILL BE APPOINTED NEXT MOZAMBICAN GOVERNOR GENERAL. BIOGRAPHIC DATA FOLLOWS:

2. DR. SOARES DE MELO WAS BORN INHAMBANE, MOZAMBIQUE, JUNE 12, 1918 OF GOAN-PORTUGUESE FAMILY. HE GRADUATED LISBON LAW SCHOOL 1942, AND HAS PRACTISED LAW IN MOZAMBIQUE FOR SOME 29 YEARS, IN RECENT YEARS AS PARTNER AND ASSOCIATE OF INTERTERRITORIAL MINISTER DE ALMEIDA SANTOS. FROM ABOUT 1946 UNTIL LATE 1959'S (WHEN IT WAS BANNED) HE EDITED LIBERAL MONTHLY MAGAZINE ITINERARIO. TOGETHER WITH OTHER LIBERAL MOZAMBIQUE LAWYERS (DE ALMEIDA SANTOS, ET AL) DE MELO WAS INVOLVED IN 1958 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN OF GENERAL HUMBERTO DELGADO, AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY INDICTED FOR OPPO-

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SITION TO "INDIGENATO" LAWS GOVERNING AFRICAN "NATIVES",

AND THREATENED WITH POTENTIAL SENTENCE OF 20 YEARS. CASE WAS QUASHED WHEN "INDIGENATO" LAWS ABOLISHED IN 1961. SOARES DE MELO WAS UNSUCCESSFUL OPPOSITION CANDIDATE FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1961 BUT HAS BEEN RELATIVELY INACTIVE POLITICALLY SINCE THEN. HE HAS VARIOUS REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS AND, TOGETHER WITH DE ALMEIDA SANTOS HE OWNS PROFITABLE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS BUILDING (PREDIO RUBI) WHICH WAS HEAD-QUARTERS FOR OPPOSITION LAWYERS AND HAS SERVED SINCE COUP AS HEADQUARTERS FOR DEMOCRATS OF MOZAMBIQUE ORGANIZATION.

3. INTERVIEW WITH NOTICIAS MAY 23, SOARES DE MELO SAID THAT, IF CHOSEN, HE WOULD CONSIDER GOVERNMENT OF MOZAMBIQUE ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM OLD DAYS WHEN IT MERELY SERVED AS TRANSMISSION LINE FROM LISBON. "I INTEND . . . TO ESTABLISH A REALLY AUTONOMOUS 'MINISTRY', FREE IN ITS INTERNAL AND EVEN EXTERNAL RELATIONS. THESE CONDITIONS ARE A SINE QUANON AND, THE MINISTER (DE ALMEIDA SANTOS) VISITING US DID NOT HESITATE IN GIVING THESE FUNDAMENTAL GUARANTEES." IN SUBSEQUENT RADIO INTERVIEW, SOARES DE MELO IMPLIED HE HAD ALREADY SELECTED A CABINET TEAM.

4. COMMENT: DR. SOARES DE MELO HAS IMPECCABLE "DEMOCRATIC" BACKGROUND, BUT WE KNOW LITTLE OF HIS ADMINISTRATIVE QUALIFICATIONS OR HIS LINES OF CONTACT, IF ANY, WITH AFRICAN POPULATION OF MOZAMBIQUE. AS RESPECTED LOCAL FIGURE, WITH PIPELINE TO NEW INTERTERRITORIAL MINISTER, HE MAY BE IN POSITION TO PERFORM THANKLESS TASKS WHICH WILL NO DOUBT BE REQUIRED OF GOVERNOR GENERAL OVER COMING TRANSITIONAL PERIOD.
VAN OSS

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